Junta Informed U.S. of Its Plans Before the Coup

'Hands-Off' Policy Set

9/13/7

By Dan Morgan
Washington Post Staff Writer

The U.S. government learned of the military coup in Chile the night before it happened, but policy makers in Washington at "the highest level" decided on a hands-off policy after evaluating the information, an administration official revealed yesterday.

This description of events leading to the overthrow of Chilean President Salvador Allende was given by a State Department official in a closed briefing for senators as the Nixon administration sought to dispel speculation of possible U.S. complicity in the ouster of the Marxist government.

Jack Kubisch, assistant secretary of state and U.S. coordinator for the Alliance for Progress, told members of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that there had been "no involvement by the U.S. government, U.S. corporations, agencies or citizens," sources reported.

Sen. Gale W. McGee (D-Wyo.) said committee members had told Kubisch that a statement to that effect should be issued at the highest level to quash any possible suspicions and rumors.

According to the information that Kubisch gave the subcommittee, a Chilean officer had mentioned to an American officer in Chile that a coup was brewing. One source said that the tip came "not more than 14 to 16 hours before—maybe as little as 10."

The information was then passed on to "the highest level" in Washington and a decision was made to keep hands off, the source said, adding that this meant that President Nixon was notified. Apparently, the information was not conveyed to the Chilean regime.

The military takeover immediately posed a potential embarrassment, because American disapproval of the Marxist-led regime is well known, and because charges of U.S. connivance against the regime were raised last spring before Senate subcommittee investigating the role of U.S. corporations there.

At that time, there was

See REACT, A12, Col. 6